



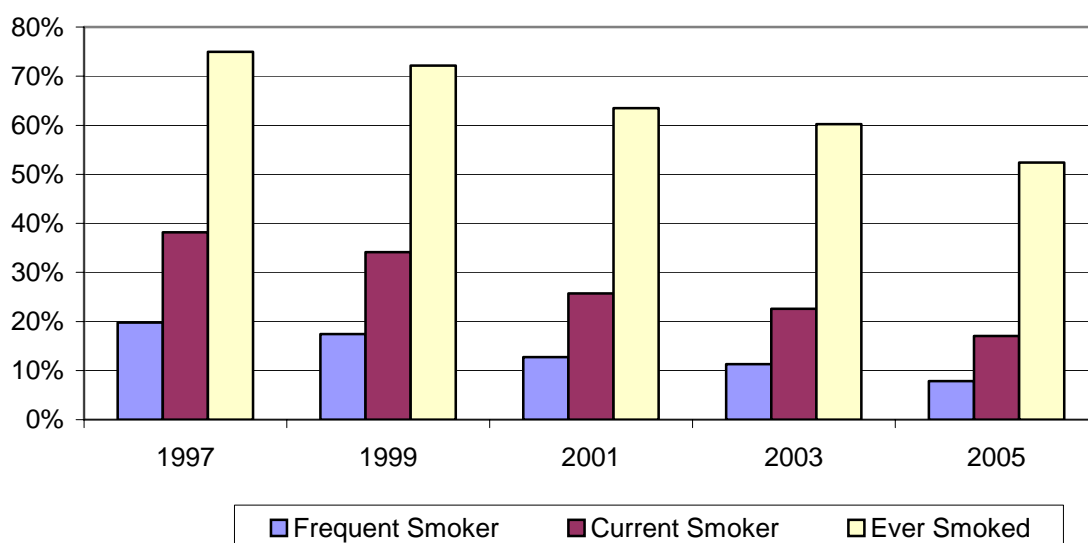
## Topic: Risky Health Behaviors

### 6. Adolescent Tobacco Use

Adolescent tobacco use is often referred to as a pediatric disease because most addiction to tobacco happens in youth under the age of 18. Among adult smokers in Michigan, approximately 90% of them began smoking before they were 18 years old.

#### *How are we doing?*

**Cigarette Use among Michigan Youth, 1997-2005**



In Michigan, over 50% of high school students have ever tried smoking a cigarette and 17% of the students smoked a cigarette in the last month, an indication of current smokers. Current cigarette smoking among high school students in Michigan has declined over 55% since 1997, yet according to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, everyday in Michigan about 60 youth become new daily smokers. Eventually, one-third of them will die from their addiction.

#### *How Does Michigan compare with the U.S.?*

In 2005, Michigan's current youth smoking rate of 17% was much lower than the U.S. youth smoking rate of 23%.

#### *How are different populations affected?*

White students and Hispanic students were more likely than Black students to have smoked a cigarette within 30 days. White and Hispanic students had smoking rates of 18.1% and 27.3%, respectively. In comparison, Black students had a smoking rate of 7.6%. Many attribute the lower rates of tobacco use among Black adolescents to greater parental disapproval of smoking and less exposure to peers who smoke.



### ***What is the Department of Community Health doing to improve this indicator?***

The MDCH provides support and assistance to local community agencies and tobacco reduction coalitions to increase youth involvement in tobacco-free policy activities, such as educating tobacco retailers on the Michigan Youth Tobacco Act (YTA) to prevent underage access to tobacco.

Youth access to tobacco has decreased through the enforcement of the YTA. This act prohibits the sale of tobacco by retailers to minors, prohibits youth from purchasing tobacco and adults from purchasing tobacco for youth, and also prohibits possession of tobacco among minors. Local prosecuting attorneys and other law enforcement agencies support the YTA. The MDCH conducts annual, random, unannounced inspections to ensure compliance with existing laws. Illegal sales of tobacco products to minors from tobacco retailers have decreased almost 70% since 1994.

The MDCH promotes, implements and enforces local smoke-free work site and public regulations, such as 24/7 tobacco-free campus policies for public and private schools in Michigan. These policies prohibit the use of tobacco in any form, at any time (including non-school hours) while on school grounds and during any school-sponsored functions held off campus.

Studies have shown that smoke-free policies help prevent kids from smoking. The Department uses the Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education to help improve students' health behaviors. In kindergarten through twelfth grades, over one million students in Michigan receive education concerning tobacco use and other substance abuse.

In 2004, the cigarette tax was increased from \$1.25 per pack to \$2.00 per pack. Studies have shown that every 10% increase in the price of cigarettes will reduce youth smoking by about seven percent and overall cigarette consumption by about four percent.